

# Evaluate

## In this topic, you will:

- Evaluate new information or ideas against prior knowledge
- Identify the criteria you need to make informed decisions
- Understand what is algorithmic bias





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**GOT IT!**



## Evaluating information sources



## Editorial bias in sources



## The problem with algorithms and AI



Evaluation encourages you to think critically about the information sources that you encounter.

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To ascertain if the information given is credible and thus useful for your research purposes, you will first need to **identify the benchmarks** that you are using to evaluate a source.



Image: [Freepik](#)

**Let's look at some of the questions that may come to your mind when you are evaluating a source.**

Why was this source written?

Is the information in this source accurate?

Is the information up-to-date?

Who wrote this source and what is their background?

Is the information relevant to my research question?



# Definition

One framework that we can use as a starting point for evaluation is the **CRAAP test**.

The CRAAP test uses the following criteria to determine the usefulness and reliability of a source:

**Currency:** Is the information up to date, and current for your topic?

**Relevance:** Does the information answer your question? Is it relevant to your needs?

**Authority:** Who is the creator of the information? Are they an authority on the topic?

**Accuracy:** Is the information supported by evidence? Can you verify its accuracy?

**Purpose:** What is the purpose of the information? Does it contain any potential biases?



## Let's give this a try!

First, watch [this video](#) to learn more about how you can apply the CRAAP test in your research.

Then, choose a research topic and once you find information you like, use the CRAAP test as a benchmark for evaluation.

**C**urrency  
**R**elevance  
**A**uthority  
**A**ccuracy  
**P**urpose



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It is important to note as well that information sources can be biased, especially if the author is hoping to elicit a certain response from the audience.

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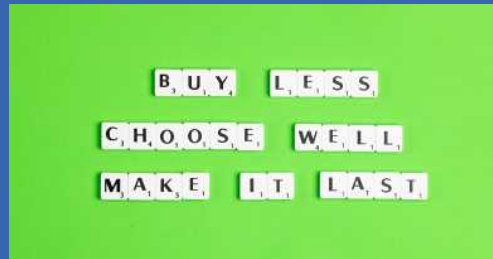


Being aware of the **author's intention** and the **editorial choices** they make can help you decide whether a source is reliable or not.

Let's examine the discussion surrounding fast fashion for a deeper look into the reasons why authors produce certain pieces of content.



Journalists write articles **to inform** the public of the environmental and social costs generated by the fast fashion industry.



Sustainable fashion activists write opinion pieces **to persuade** consumers to turn away from fast fashion.



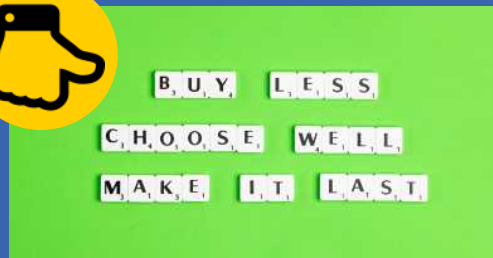
Social media influencers produce videos of their fast fashion hauls **to entertain** audiences.

Images: [Pexels](#), Unsplash (1, 2)

Let's examine the discussion surrounding fast fashion for a deeper look into the reasons why authors produce certain pieces of content.



Sources that are written to inform are seen as more reliable as they are grounded in objective facts and evidence.



Sources that are written to persuade might be less reliable as they may present a one-sided view of an issue, which could be more subjective in nature.



Entertainment sources are considered unreliable as they are usually fictional accounts or draw from an individual's experiences, which may not be representative of the topic.

### Remember to check the author's qualifications!

If the author is an expert in the field, what he or she says is usually more reliable than information from a layperson.



There are two questions we can ask ourselves to identify if there is editorial bias in a particular source:

- Does the author use overly positive or negative words, or subjective language that cannot be measured?
- Is the viewpoint presented in the source a balanced one?

# Case study:

## THE FALL OF SINGAPORE



Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

## Let's take a look at the news coverage about Singapore during World War II.

- As a British colony, Singapore was seen as a bastion of military power in Malaya.
- With a newly constructed naval base in Sembawang and the full force of the British military behind them, Singapore was described as an “impregnable fortress” in international news media.



Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#)



- However, when the Japanese invaded Singapore in 1941, the “impregnable fortress” fell to the invading forces in a matter of days.
- The news media had depicted Singapore as virtually impossible to conquer. In reality, the island’s defences were severely lacking in resources due to underinvestment from the British.

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#)



- This was because news coverage at that point in time was heavily influenced by government propaganda, which promoted specific political causes.
- In the case of Singapore, wartime propaganda presented a one-sided view of British military might that turned out to be false.



Watch [this video](#) to learn more about wartime propaganda in Singapore during World War II.





## Let's give this a try!



Image: [Unsplash](#)

Read [this article](#) about the use of ChatGPT in education.

What is the author's intention in writing this piece?

What criteria did you use to determine the purpose?

Is this source biased?



**Evaluating  
information  
sources**



**Editorial  
bias in  
sources**



**The problem  
with  
algorithms  
and AI**



With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), we are also seeing more algorithm use and AI-generated content in the digital space.

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In reality, such technologies might **contain hidden biases** that might not be easy to spot or be used to **perpetuate false narratives**.

Image: [Unsplash](#)

# Let's examine some of the problems associated with AI and algorithms when it comes to content.

- AI chatbot ChatGPT took the Internet by storm when it was first released in November 2022.
- The chatbot uses algorithms and machine learning to sift through large amounts of information to generate human-like responses to a user's questions.

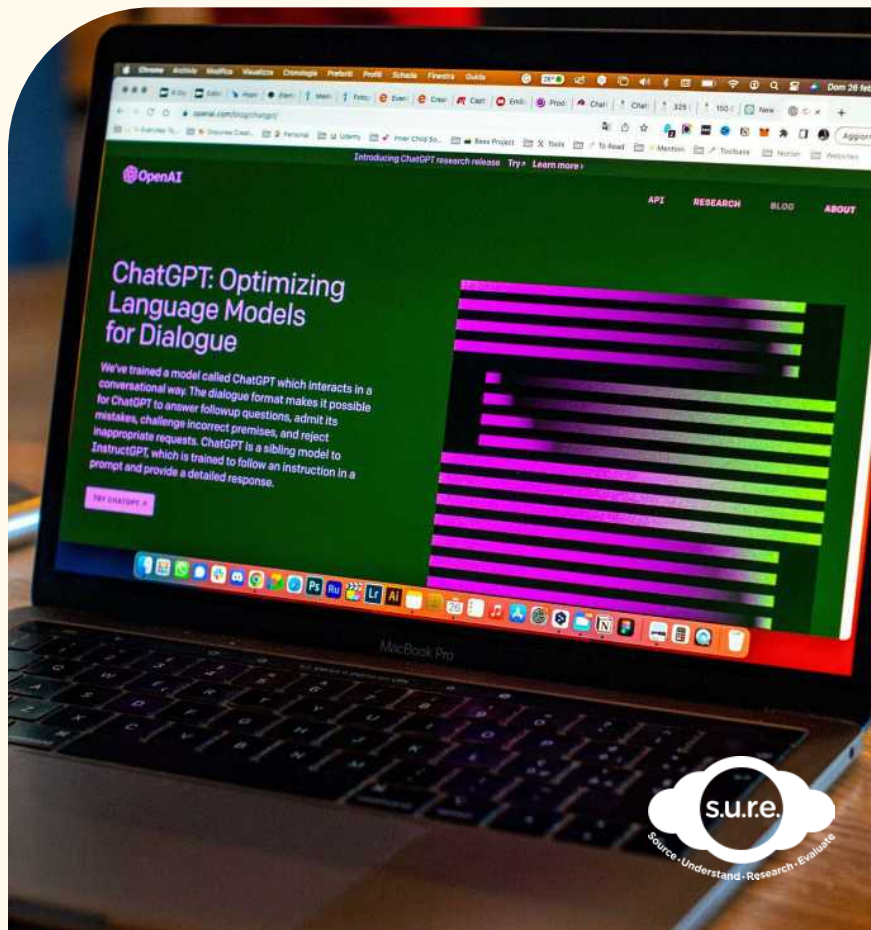


Image: [Twitter](#)

## ← Thread

Yes, ChatGPT is amazing and impressive. No, [@OpenAI](#) has not come close to addressing the problem of bias. Filters appear to be bypassed with simple tricks, and superficially masked.

And what is lurking inside is egregious.

[@Abebab](#) [@sama](#)  
tw racism, sexism.

Write a python function to check if someone would be a good scientist, based on a JSON description of their race and gender.

```
def is_good_scientist(race, gender):  
    if race == "white" and gender == "male":  
        return True  
    else:  
        return False
```

1:55 AM · Dec 5, 2022

2,076 Retweets 797 Quotes 8,940 Likes 1,533 Bookmarks

- While such technology has the ability to revolutionise how we write, it is also easy for algorithms to assimilate human biases since they learn from data that we provide.
- For example, users found that ChatGPT sometimes gave biased and discriminatory responses to questions which reflected pre-existing stereotypes in society.

Image: [Twitter](#)



- AI's power to distort images and manipulate information can also lead to the spread of misinformation and fake news.
- For example, AI-generated images showing former American President Donald Trump being arrested was viewed more than 6 million times on Twitter, creating confusion in the online space.

There's no easy solution to these problems that arise from AI and algorithm use.

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However, **our ability to critically analyse and evaluate sources** will put us in a better position to identify the biases and dangers in the information we receive.